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THE MICHIGAN CLASSICAL CONFERENCES

BY FRANCIS W. KELSEY
University of Michigan

The First Michigan Classical Conference, a pioneer in its field, was organized as a section of the Michigan Schoolmasters' Club at the University of Michigan in 1895. The proceedings and papers were published in the *School Review* for that year, filling the number for June (III, 321-96). A noteworthy part of the program was a symposium on the question "Should There Be a Course of Six Years in Latin in the Secondary Schools?"; the speakers were Professor Andrew F. West, of Princeton, Professor William Gardner Hale, of the University of Chicago, and Superintendent A. F. Nightingale, of Chicago. To the Classical Conference of 1898 the *School Review* again devoted an entire number (VI, 369-481); in connection with this Conference the Committee of Twelve of the American Philological Association and auxiliary committees for Greek and for Latin held long sessions, which had their fruitful outcome in the *Report of the Committee of Twelve of the American Philological Association*.¹

The classical teachers of Michigan joined with enthusiasm in the organization of the Classical Association of the Middle West and South in 1905, and it was expected that this interstate body would supersede the Classical Conference. If we take into account the adverse conditions under which the Classical Association has labored, it has more than realized the expectations of its founders. The maintenance of the *Classical Journal*, made possible by the generous co-operation of the University of Chicago, has been a conspicuous service to classical studies, while the annual meetings have been helpful in many ways. Nevertheless, on account of the wide extent of territory included in the Association, only relatively

¹ Published by Ginn & Co., Boston, in 1899. A summary of the work accomplished in the first decade is presented in "Ten Classical Conferences: A Retrospect," *School Review*, XIII (1905), 423-28.

few of the many members are able to attend any one meeting, and its activities, so far from superseding those of local classical organizations, have proved to be in fact a distinct stimulus to them.

In Michigan, therefore, the Classical Conference has been kept up, meeting each year with the Michigan Schoolmasters' Club at the end of March; in addition, since 1913 there has been a Classical Section of the Michigan State Teachers' Association which holds its annual meeting at the end of October. The State Association has encouraged the inviting of a speaker each year from outside the state, so that those attending the Classical Section in successive years have heard addresses by representatives of the classical work in the Universities of Chicago, Missouri, and Wisconsin, the Johns Hopkins University, and the Archaeological Institute of America. The section has also had a general program and has concerned itself with arranging for the furnishing of stereopticon slides to schools, as well as with other matters of direct interest to classical teachers.

The Classical Conference was originally founded in protest against devoting the time of gatherings of teachers almost exclusively to questions of method, a practice which in the early nineties was in vogue to a degree now difficult to realize.¹ It aimed, of course, to encourage thoughtful discussion of all aspects of the problem of classical teaching, but not to the exclusion of the interests of scholarship; it afforded opportunity and furnished an incentive for the presentation of results of work in the various fields of classical study. A large number of the papers dealing with matters of scholarship which have appeared on the programs of the Conferences are accessible in printed form, in journals, or in books. A collection of papers relating to classical study, including seven "Symposia," was published in 1911 under the title *Latin and Greek in American Education*.²

¹ Cf. "Should Papers Dealing with Matters of Scholarship or Papers on Method be the Chief Feature of Teachers' Meetings?" *School Review*, IV (1896), 594-603; also "Latin in the High School," *Educational Review*, VIII, 28-42.

² Unfortunately this volume is out of print, although requests for it are constantly being received; the demand exceeded expectations. A new edition is in preparation and will be published, with additional matter, after the war.

Recently two similar volumes of great interest to the friends of classical study have appeared, *The Value of the Classics*, edited by Dean Andrew F. West (Princeton University Press, 1917), and *The Greek Genius and Its Influence*, edited by Professor Lane Cooper (Yale University Press, 1917).

In recent years the traditional program of the Conference has been expanded in two ways. In 1916 the Classical Club of the University of Michigan presented the *Menaechmi* of Plautus, in Latin.¹ This was followed, in 1917, by the *Iphigenia among the Taurians*, in Greek,² with special music composed for this presentation by Professor Albert A. Stanley and choral dances designed by Professor H. A. Kenyon. At the conference of 1918 the Classical Club presented the *Phormio* of Terence in English, in a new version by Professor J. R. Nelson, with adaptations to the modern stage.

Two years ago representatives of the classical teachers of the state requested that if possible an arrangement should be made to supplement the ordinary program of twenty-minute papers by one or more short courses of lectures upon subjects not too remote from the classical work of the high schools. This request was met by joining with the department of education in the University and arranging to group the classical lectures with lectures on educational subjects in an "Institute" held in connection with the Conference and the meeting of the Schoolmasters' Club. In 1917 Professor Ralph V. D. Magoffin, of Johns Hopkins University, gave four illustrated lectures on "Roman Private Life"; in 1918 Professor Gordon J. Laing delivered four lectures, illustrated, on "Roman Religion," and Professor John J. Winter a similar course on "Aegean Civilization." At the Conference of 1919 it is expected that Professor C. T. Currelly, of the University of Toronto, will give four lectures dealing with the results of recent excavations in Egypt which throw light upon Roman life in the period of the Empire, and Professor Campbell Bonner will present a course upon the Greek religion.

Until the war began the *School Review* continued to publish the proceedings of the Classical Conference in brief form, as well as a selection from the educational papers presented. No such

¹ A libretto for this play was published, with stage directions, and with an English translation by Professor Joseph H. Drake facing the text (Macmillan).

² An account of the Greek play by Professor H. H. Yeames was published in *The Nation* for April 19, 1917 (reprinted in the *Classical Weekly* for May 7, 1917); an illustrated account appeared in *Art and Archaeology* for June, 1917. The music will be published after the war.

publication has been made, however, since 1915. To judge from inquiries received, it seems desirable to resume the publication, at least of the programs; if this is to be done, those in Michigan and elsewhere who are interested in the Conference will now find it more convenient to have reports of its work in the *Classical Journal* than in any other publication. In this matter, therefore, the officers of the Conference again gladly avail themselves of the courtesy of this *Journal*, which in previous years has printed a number of the papers prepared for its sessions.